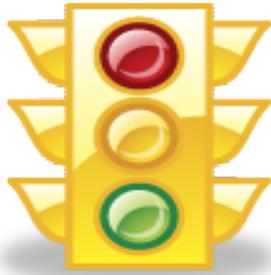


# Safety Games

**Subject:** Language Arts, Social Studies



## OBJECTIVES:

- Students will identify and recognize basic traffic safety signs.
- Students will learn about traffic lights through a discussion and game.



## MATERIALS:

- Flash cards, each showing a different safety icon (*provided by Safe Routes to Schools*)
- Flash cards with various safety words



## SETTING:

- Part I: in the classroom
- Part II: playground blacktop



## ESTIMATED TIME:

40 minutes



## VOCABULARY:

Traffic signal, pedestrian



## ACTIVITY SOURCE:

*Safe Routes to Schools, Nebraska*



**OVERVIEW:** Students will learn basic traffic safety signal safety, reinforced through flash cards and playing Red Light, Green Light.

**NOTE:** This lesson could be Part II of “Use Your Head Before Your Feet” and would be appropriate before taking the students on their first walking field trip.

**BACKGROUND:** Many children today depend on their parents to drive them everywhere, especially when they go to school. National data has shown that driving has become the major mode of transportation for children, even for short-distance trips. Children therefore are often not being taught basic pedestrian/traffic skills necessary to help them navigate safely on the street, which can cause injuries or fatalities.

When teaching young children about pedestrian/traffic safety, it’s important to understand that there’s no specific age for knowing when children are ready to walk by themselves, just different developmental and maturity levels. At this age it’s important to teach children that they should always walk places with an adult or an older sibling.

The very first thing is to teach children to stop at a curb and to look **LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT** for traffic before **proceeding**. *Many children have a tendency to dart out into traffic, so reiterating this concept over and over again is essential.* Make sure children have safe play areas away from traffic such as fenced playgrounds and yards.

Here are a few other tips to teach children in this lesson:

- Make sure drivers see you by making **eye contact** with them.
- Be alert for all traffic signals.
- At traffic lights, cross only when the light facing you is green.
- Obey the crossing guard or safety patrol.

## LESSON SET-UP:

1. Create the following words as flash cards: traffic signal, walk, don’t walk, stop, red light, green light, yellow light.

## STATE STANDARDS

### History and Social Studies:

#### **Learning and Working Now and Long Ago:**

K.4-3 Identify traffic symbols and map symbols.

### Language Arts:

#### **Word Analysis, Fluency and Systematic Vocabulary Development:**

1.11: Distinguish orally stated one-syllable words and separate into beginning or ending sounds.

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## DISCUSSION:

- Engage students in a discussion about walking. What are some of their favorite places to walk? Introduce the word pedestrian. Brainstorm with them some basic safety rules—how do they stay safe while walking on streets?
- Ask the following questions:
  - Where is it safe to cross the street? (*Only at corners and on marked crosswalks*).
  - What should you do before crossing? (*Stop. Wait. Look around carefully. Be sure no cars are moving through a red traffic signal. Look left, right and left again before crossing*).
  - What does a blinking DON'T WALK sign mean? (*Do not start to walk. If you have already started, hurry across. Cars will be moving again soon*).
  - What should a walker do when crossing an alley or driveway? (*Look around carefully. Cars might drive across the sidewalk where you are walking*).
  - What signs and signals might they see at a marked crosswalk to help them cross the street? (*stop signs or traffic signals*)

## ACTIVITY:

### **PART I: Safety Flash Cards**

- Introduce the flash cards provided by Safe Routes to Schools (*In Materials Section*). Let them name what's in the picture and ask them the following questions for each flash card:
  - ✓ What is the name of this item?
  - ✓ What does it do to keep pedestrians safe?
  - ✓ What should they do when they see this on the street?
- As a Language Arts supplement, introduce the word as a flash card at the same time you are talking about the item (traffic signal, walk, don't walk, etc.).
- The last cards you should hold up are the traffic signal cards. Ask students what the different colors mean and what they should do when they see each of the colors on the street.

### **PART II: Red Light, Green Light**

Go out to the playground blacktop with the students and explain the game:

- Explain to students that you will pretend to be the stoplight, and they will pretend they are cars. When you hold up the green light card, the students can move forward. When you hold up the red light card, the students must stop.
- Now, instruct the students to pretend they are pedestrians crossing the street. When you hold up the Walk card, they can cross. When you hold up the Don't Walk card, they must stop. Tell the children the importance of looking left, right, and then left again when crossing the street.
- Explain that many times cars "run" red lights, so it is very important for them to wait a few seconds and to look for cars that have run the light before they start to cross at the crosswalk. Sometimes car drivers don't do the right thing and obey the laws, so you must always be alert as a pedestrian!
- Discuss the role of the yellow light. Tell students that when they're crossing an intersection and the light turns yellow, that means they should proceed with caution and walk faster across the street. However, if students are getting ready to cross the street but the light turns yellow, this means they should stop and wait until the light turns green again.
- Play the game again, adding the yellow light to the game and instructing the students to hurry across the rest of the "street" once the light turns yellow.

### EXTENSION IDEAS

- Take the students to a nearby traffic signal and crosswalk with some adult volunteers. Practice going through the traffic light and crosswalk with them.
- Send the note provided home to parents explaining that the children are learning about traffic signals and pedestrian safety. Ask them to practice these skills by taking walks with them.
- Have students draw pictures of traffic signals with the correct colors, and write the words "stop", "go", and "slow down" next to the appropriate colors.